

# The Library Assistant:

*The Official Organ of the Library Assistants' Association.*

No. 80.

AUGUST, 1904.

Published Monthly

## ELECTION OF OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE.

The result of the ballot for Officers and Members of the Committee is now announced as under:—

### *Officers :*

Chairman	...	...	Mr. W. G. CHAMBERS.
Hon. Secretary	...	...	" G. E. ROEBUCK.
Hon. Treasurer	...	...	" W. G. CHAMBERS.

### *London Members of Committee :*

<i>Elected.</i>			<i>Not Elected.</i>		
Rees (E. G.)	...	47	Harper (B. J.)	...	20
Thorne (W. B.)	...	44	Bursill (P. C.)	...	15
Rivers (J.)	...	43			
Bullen (R. F.)	...	38			
Hawkins (W. G.)	...	36			
Coltman (W. L.)	...	35			
Hogg (J. F.)	...	35			
Smith (H.)	...	32			
McDouall (W. B.)	...	27			
Green (T.)	...	24			

### *Non-London Members of Committee.*

There having been no contest, the following gentlemen were declared elected:—

Harris (W. J.)		Radcliffe (J.)
Hatcher (S. A.)		Sayers (W. C. B.)
Law (W.)		Sureties (H. G.)
Poulter (H. W.)		Whitwell (C.)

## AN OLD TOWN LIBRARY.

By HENRY OGLE.

It has been suggested that a few notes on an ancient East Anglian Town Library would be of interest to the readers of this journal, and the following remarks are offered as an instance of bibliographical experiences which may be repeated in other places.

Although twelve miles of the Estuary of the Orwell intervenes between Ipswich and the open sea, that waterway has always been sufficiently navigable to allow of a shipping trade; and the spaciousness, elegance and frequent artistic merit of the habitations of her ancient merchant princes is attested by many remaining examples, now gradually but surely disappearing. It is perhaps more than a coincidence that the three earliest known Town Libraries were established at sea-ports, Norwich having anciently been navigable from the sea, and Bristol, long the queen of western ports. It may be a fair assumption that constant trading with foreign nations incidently bred an interest in literature, and especially an emulation of the stores of literary treasures housed in continental towns.

So far as can be at present ascertained, Norwich, also an East Anglian town, with a library founded in 1608 for the free use of the townspeople, appears to have the credit of being the pioneer in town libraries. Bristol possessed evidence of apparently taking the second place with the year 1613. Ipswich Town Library however, proves, on documentary evidence, to have been in actual operation in 1612.

Without going into much detail a general idea of the ancient Ipswich Town Library may be given with the aid of some old local documents in print, and the evidence of the books themselves, although the writer has not at present found time to follow its history, or to study its contents, in any but the most cursory fashion.

An entry from the "Annals of Ipswich," a 17th century Corporation MS., under date 1594 states that "a treaty was appointed with the Lord Mayor and his brethren, by such as Mr. Bailiffs shall appoint, concerning Mrs. Walter's gift (£50), and the recovery of the same to the town." Whether Mrs. Walter appropriated this gift to the purchase of books or left the money at the discretion of the Corporation is not known. Not later than 1612, however, it was expended in books for the library. The will of William Smart, Portman (answering to the present title of Alderman), amongst many other provisions stated that "my latten printed bookes and written bookes in volume and p'chmente . . . . I gyve towards one library, safeley to be keepte in the Vestry of the parishe church of St. Mary Tower in Ipsw'ch aforesayde, and the doore to have two sufficient lockes and keyes, th' one to remayne in the custodye of the minister of the parish for the tyme beinge, to be used there by the co'mon preacher of the sayde towne for the tyme beinge, or any other preacher mynded to preache in the sayde p'ish church." This provision was not carried out, and the books

were kept in a chest at Christ's Hospital until 1612, when the Corporation furnished a spacious room in Christ's Hospital "with convenient presses, for the security of these books, and for the reception of more." This building was formerly a house of the Black Friars, Dominicans, and was purchased by the Corporation soon after the dissolution of the monasteries, to serve as grammar school, almshouses, and bridewell, and finally disappeared in 1851, when new almshouses were built on the Tooley and Smart foundation of the 17th century. The Library suffered a good deal of neglect, and its location was several times changed, the Literary Institution having possession of it in 1832. There were over 900 volumes at one time in the Library, of which about 250 have been lost, 70 of these during the last century, as proved by the writer's recent comparison with the catalogue of 1799.

There are ten volumes of ancient manuscripts, nine having been executed in the 12th, 13th, and 14th centuries on vellum. Some of the MSS. are illuminated throughout, one containing a large and beautiful specimen deserving special notice. Two of the MSS. were probably written at Bury St. Edmund's Abbey, the home of Jocelyn de Brakelond, where recent excavations have brought to light the coffin and bones of Abbot Sampson, one of Carlyle's heroes in "Past and Present." The MSS. exhibit exquisite workmanship, and amongst other characteristics afford examples of the varying qualities of the vellum at the disposal of the scriptorium. The subject matter is entirely theological and ecclesiastical.

Amongst the printed books are several incunabula, the oldest being "*Pantheologia, seu Summa Universæ Theologiæ*," by Raynerius de Pisis, folio, printed at Nuremberg by Anthony Koburger in 1474; "*Appiani Alexandrini Historia*," Venice, Bernard Pictor, and others, 1477, quarto; "*Mammotrectus*" (a priest's manual), Venice, Nicholas Jensen, 1477; "*Maillardi Sermones*," Lyons, John de Uingle, 1498, octavo.

Later works include Bibles, "Great," "Bishop's," "La Bible," Geneva, 1588; Brian Walton's "Polygeot," presented soon after publication by Sir Henry Felton, a family name of tragic historical interest; several books from the great Parisian press of Stephens: first editions of the "Monasticon," and Raleigh's "History of the World"; Dugdale's "Baronage," several valuable old county histories; a second edition Purchas's "Pilgrims." There are specimens from the presses

of Froben, the Wechels, Froscoverus, Blaeu, Plantin, and others. One of the Ipswich donors was Captain Thomas Eldred who accompanied Cavendish in his circumnavigation of the world in 1586, and whose residence until lately held evidences of a highly cultivated artistic taste.

In a different way from all the others William Dowsing comes before us in connection with the Library. Appointed "Parliamentary Visitor to the Suffolk Churches" in 1640, his official mission was to destroy all "superstitious images and pictures" in the churches of Suffolk. He carried out his work with such zeal and thoroughness that many Ipswich and Suffolk churches were denuded of their brasses, decorative sculpture in wood and stone, and stained glass windows. He kept a journal, of which only a copy in another hand is known. It has been printed and is naturally of very great interest, as it contains entries of the places visited by himself and deputies, stating the number of "images and pictures" destroyed. It was the writer's fortune, when taking stock of the volumes in the Old Town Library, to observe the handwriting on the margins in six thick small quarto books that do not previously appear to have attracted any attention, and which a further examination proved to possess a double interest. The binding was full rough calf, with tapes, and the initials "W.D." lettered in gold on the sides, in quaintly shaped seventeenth century letters. The books were entered in the 1799 catalogue as "Parliamentary Sermons," and were presented to the Library in 1725 by the Rev. W. Matthews, Rector of Shotley (Suffolk), and Curate of St. Lawrence (Ipswich). The books are entirely made up of sermons preached before the Houses of Parliament, 1641-46, and officially ordered to be printed. Each sermon has a separate title-page and pagination, with from twenty to forty pages, beside an introduction. The names of the preachers appearing on the various title-pages include such eminent divines of the day as Calamy (of Suffolk), Dr. Thomas Young, Milton's tutor, a Scotsman and incumbent of Stowmarket, Suffolk; Rutherford, the celebrated Scots Divine, and many others. Simply as a collection of sermons of that interesting period their value is evident, but the special interest lies in the fact that the sermons were collected by William Dowsing, many of them having his signature on the title-page, and his annotations throughout, exhibiting evidence of very careful reading and a clear and independent judgment. An autograph note is frequently found at the end of a sermon stating the date of reading. In the same hand a list of the sermons with texts and preachers' names, is found on the fly-leaf of one volume. A London pressman recently made a

sad blunder in trying to condense from the local daily an article on the Dowsing volumes. He entertained the impression that Dowsing *preached* all the sermons before Parliament, instead of merely collecting them after publication.

It is known that there were three men of different ages called William Dowsing living in Suffolk at the period in question. Owing to the absence of means of identifying the handwriting, it cannot be specifically stated that the sermons were the property of the iconoclast. That conclusion would, however, appear to be not inconsistent, as both the iconoclasm and the annotations show strong evidences of a zealous, thorough, and faithful, if also narrow and somewhat fanatical personality.

---

## A PRIMER OF LIBRARY PRACTICE FOR JUNIOR ASSISTANTS.

By G. E. ROEBUCK AND W. B. THORNE.

(G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1/6 net).

---

This little manual fills a gap in our professional literature which has, on more than one occasion, been pointed out in these pages. We hear much of the crass ignorance of the library assistant, of his educational needs, and what not; but, till now, there has been no clear statement of the elementary principles of librarianship in general, or what is expected of the junior assistant in particular. Now we know where we are!

The "Primer of Library Practice" is evidently the work of enthusiasts, it is an earnest plea for efficiency even in those small duties which the assistant is so apt to consider tiresome and unnecessary drudgery. It is equally evident that the writers' have the juniors' cause very much at heart; and the assistant who can peruse its pages without catching some of their enthusiasm for the profession has surely mistaken his vocation. The junior is urged to fit himself, by private study, for the higher posts in library work; for, as is pointed out, the standard of education required of applicants for senior positions is constantly getting higher; whilst the large number of University men who now compete for Chief's places, is significant of much.

We are glad to see a protest, however mild, against the strictures on public libraries which certain journals indulge in, from time to time. We could never understand the lamb-like docility with which librarians invariably accept these cantankerous criticisms. But judging by the way in which these journals "ring the changes" on the "fiction question," and such secondary

matters, and the wild and weird "facts" on which their charges are, as a rule, founded, it is evident that they have, for the most part, an ignorance of the Public Library movement and its aims, which would be pathetic if it were not ludicrous. Beyond stating the main arguments on either side, however, the writers have wisely avoided controversial matters.

One remark we cannot agree with, "that embossing stamps mutilate the books, and are not in general favour among librarians." For stamping plates, diagrams, maps, etc., a light embossing machine is, in our opinion, far neater and in every way superior to the ordinary rubber stamp; not to mention the advantage of indelibility. This, however, is a matter of taste, and—*de gustibus non est disputandum*. Further, with regard to the ruling of the Stock Book, we are inclined to add a tenth to the nine headings deemed essential, namely, the date of accession by the library. Lastly, to have done with fault-finding, the writers have something of a bias towards the heretical practice of "splitting infinitives"—a practice which all good citizens should denounce with bell, book, and candle. But this, after all, is a small defect which may easily be remedied in future editions, and detracts in no way from the merit of the book. Messrs. Roebuck and Thorne are to be congratulated on a sound piece of work; and we strongly recommend every assistant, who has not already done so, to buy the book and give it a careful perusal—he will find that it will repay him. The primer is well printed and tastefully got up.

---

#### PRINTERS OF ENGLAND, I. — RICHARD PYNSON.

Very little is known of Richard Pynson's life previous to the time when he set up as a printer in a house just outside Temple Bar. Where he learnt the art which has handed his name down to fame we can only surmise. By some, including no less an authority than the late William Blades, it is thought that Pynson was an apprentice of William Caxton, the illustrious father of English printing; while others, basing their conclusions upon Pynson's method of working, have decided that he must have learnt his trade under a continental printer, probably in the office of Guillaume le Tailleur, of Rouen. Which of these two theories is the correct one, it is not the intention of the writer to discuss, his aim being rather to give an impartial version of the facts, and leave it to the reader to form his own judgment.

Pynson, in the prologue to his *Chancer*, published circa 1492, alludes to Caxton as "my worshipful master," but this may have been nothing more than a mere form of expression used by the beginner to one he recognises as a master-hand. Additional support to the Caxton-Pynson theory is found in the fact that Caxton's device is used at the end of Bonaventure's *Speculum vite Christi*, which was printed by Pynson. A copy of this book containing this device on the last page is in the British Museum, but it is quite possible that it may have been intentionally or unintentionally inserted to suit some special purpose.

The upholders of the theory of the continental origin of Pynson's art point out that he is described as a native of Normandy in his patent of naturalization, dated 30th July, 1513. Much weight is also given to this theory by the manner in which Pynson signed his early quarto books by the sheet, which is similar to that used by Le Tailleux of Rouen, instead of the method adopted by Caxton and the other early English printers, who signed each leaf for the first half of the quire. In addition to these facts, Pynson's device, or printer's mark, which consisted of his initials cut in wood, together with the style of type he first employed, resembles in many ways those used by his fellow-countryman, Le Tailleux. These, briefly, are the main arguments on either side of the controversy; and unless additional facts are produced in support of the Caxton-Pynson theory, it will be difficult for its upholders to face successfully the conclusions of modern research, which are strongly in favour of the Continental theory.

Pynson is generally supposed to have taken over the business of William Machlinia, and though it is impossible to prove that this was the case, it is generally accepted as highly probable by those who have studied Pynson's life and works. Among the various little points which help to this conclusion, mention may be made of the fact that Pynson is found using a woodcut border that had been previously used by Machlinia in a *Horae*, and that quite a number of leaves of Machlinia's books have been found from time to time, used as waste in the bindings of books undoubtedly produced by Pynson.

The exact date that Pynson commenced business as a printer is by no means certain. The first dated book we can trace to his press being a *Doctrinale*, which was printed in 1492, is now in the John Rylands Library. It is quite possible, however, that other books may have been printed previous to this date, and a grammar, preserved among the Hearne fragments in the Bodleian, together with a *Chaucer*, are now generally supposed to have been issued prior to the *Doctrinale*. The type used for these two books is of a bold, unevenly cast fount of black letter, and is probably the same as that to be seen in the *Doctrinale*. The *Chaucer* also contains a second fount of small, sloping Gothic type, and is illustrated with a number of rather rudely executed woodcuts of the various pilgrims in the *Canterbury Tales*, evidently cut specially for the book, but altered while the book was passing through the press, and made to serve again for different characters.

In 1493, Pynson published an edition of *Dives and Pauper*, in the colophon of which he states that he was living "at the Temple-barre of London," though, in books printed shortly afterwards, this was altered to "dwelling without the Temple-barre." This book was printed in a new type, remarkable for the sharp angular finish to the letter "h," and closely resembling in many respects that of a French model used by Antoine Vêrard. About this date (1493), several quartos were printed in this type. The most noteworthy examples being *Festum Nominis Jesu*, an edition of Lydgate's *Churl and the Bird*, a *Life of St. Margaret*, which is only known from fragments, and a legal work, of which there is one leaf in the Lambeth Palace Library.

After a short trial with his new type, Pynson, for some reason unknown, discarded it in favour of the small type used in his *Chaucer*. About 1494, he produced Lydgate's translation of Boccaccio's *Fall of Princes* printed with this type, and illustrated with a series of well executed headpieces in woodcut. It is interesting to note that a copy of this book now in the British Museum, was rescued from the counter of a small shop, where it was being used for the purpose of making small bags for sweets.

For the year 1495 no dated books have been preserved, but it is generally thought that the *Petronylla* and the *Art and Craft to know well to Dye* belong to this period. In the following year Pynson issued a small supplement to the first edition of the *Hymns and Sequences*, printed at Cologne by Quentell, which was followed by a complete edition in the next year. To 1497 also belongs a *Horae ad usum Sarum* and six plays of Terence, each paged separately so that they could be issued apart.

Between 1498 and 1500 two undated folios were printed. *The History of Reynard the Fox*, and an illustrated edition of a *Speculum vitae Christi*. During the year 1500 a *Book of Cookery* and a *Sarum Missal* were printed. The former, of which only one copy is known, is in the library at Longleat, while the latter, the most beautifully printed book produced up to that time in England, was printed at the expense of Cardinal Morton, and is from that reason known as the "Morton Missal." About this period a number of undated books must have been printed, including editions of *Guy of Warwick*, *Maunderville's Travels*, *Informatio Puerorum*, some school books, year-books and legal works.

During the year 1502 or 1503 Pynson moved from outside Temple Bar to the George in Fleet Street, next to St. Dunstan's Church, where he continued until the end of his life. Soon after his removal he appears to have given up the use of Gothic types in favour of English black-letter, and from the great similarity, both in the size and form of the fount and ornaments, which De Worde, Notary, and Pynson used at this time, it is probable that the three printers obtained their type from the same foundry. Indeed, the only difference between the black-letter used by Pynson and that of his contemporaries, during the first years of the sixteenth century, is the occurrence of a lower case "w" of a different shape.

In 1509, appeared a *Sermo Fratris Hieronimi de Ferrara*, in which Pynson had the honour to be the first printer in England to use Roman type. In the same year, he issued an edition of Barclay's translation of Brandt's *Ship of Fools of the Worlde*, in which the Latin text and English translation are set side by side. The size of this book is folio, and two founts of type, one of Roman and one of English black-letter were used in its printing. It was also illustrated with wood-cuts evidently copied from those of a German edition.

About 1510, Henry VIII. appointed Pynson as Royal Printer, a title to which was attached both honour and profit; for, from this time onwards, numerous entries in the state Papers show that he was in receipt of an annuity, and that from time to time he received extra grants of money for special services rendered. In his capacity as Royal Printer, Pynson issued Henry's works against Luther, printed numbers of Proclamations and Year-books, in addition to all the Statutes.

In 1513, Pynson issued the *Sege and Dystrucion of Troye*, of which a few copies printed on vellum are still in existence. Several other books were also printed on this material, the most noteworthy being the *Sarum Missal* of 1520, and the *Assertio Septem Sacramentorum* of 1521.

Pynson, as the first printer in this country to receive a Royal patent, must have been a man of considerable importance in the eyes of his fellow citizens. His device, or printer's mark, used in his earliest books, consisted simply of his initials cut in wood so as to print white on a black background. In 1496 however, he used two new devices; one, a large woodcut containing his mark above which was a helmet surmounted by a small bird, no doubt a punning allusion to his name, *pynson* being the Norman word for a finch; the other, a metal cut in two pieces, consisted of a border of men and flowers, and an interior piece with Pynson's mark on a shield and supporters. The first device, which was probably cut from a block of pear-tree wood of a soft character, soon showed signs of

wear; and shortly after 1497 it became so worn that it ceased to be used. The second device, which Herbert describes as "three cinquefoils on a fess engrailed between three eagles (or finches) displayed," also wore very badly, and its different stages of deterioration form a fairly safe guide as to the date of any book upon which this mark happens to be impressed. This device was in turn succeeded by a woodcut block of a much larger and stronger form, without a border, with the initials printed black upon a white ground.

Pynson died in harness at his house in Fleet Street in 1529, being engaged at the time of his death upon an edition of Palsgrave's *Esclarcissement de la Langue Francoyse*, which was finished in the next year by his executor, John Hawkins. His will dated the 18th November, 1529, was proved on the 18th of February, 1530. He was succeeded in business by Robert Redman, a printer who had been for some years past his rather unscrupulous rival.

Pynson from his intimate knowledge of Norman French, must have been admirably fitted to fill the position of principal printer of law books, which were at that date mostly written in the Latin and French languages. Though he printed over 300 books and pamphlets during his life, Pynson did not by any means print to supply the public taste for light literature as did his rival Wynkyn de Worde. He rather seems to have taken as his maxim, Quality not Quantity, and the high standard of excellence he attained, cause him to be regarded as one of the finest printers this country has ever seen.

FRANK J. P. BURGONE,  
Battersea Public Libraries.

[NOTE.—We are indebted to Mr. Thorne for pointing out that there is a MS. index attached to a book printed by Le Tailleur in Pynson's autograph with his signature appended, in a volume belonging to the St. Bride Technical Library. *Ed.*]

#### LIBRARY JOURNALS, Etc.

##### Manchester Public Free Libraries Quarterly Record. Vol. 7. No. 4.

Comprises classified (Dewey) list of books placed in the Reference Library from October to December, 1903, a very good portrait of the late Alderman Harry Rawson, J.P., formerly Chairman of the Libraries Committee, and a short history of the Manchester Foreign Library (about 14,000 volumes) recently purchased at a nominal sum.

##### Leyton Library Magazine. May. No. 23. Vol. 6.

Continues the index to the biographical history of the County of Essex, and gives the usual list of additions to the Lending Library.

##### Reader's Index: Bi-monthly magazine of the Croydon Public Libraries. May and June, 1904.

Mr. J. D. Stewart opens with an essay, written in a very able and interesting style on some famous "Diaries and Journals" contained in the Library, being No. 4 of a series entitled "The Reader's Notebook." Concludes with the technical and other additions to the Lending and Reference Libraries, classified and annotated very profusely.

**The Bootle Free Library Museum and Technical School Journal. June, 1904.**

The most important contents of this admirable library journal are : " Free Libraries and Public needs," " The Geological Diagrams " in the Magazine ; " Summaries of important education papers," No. 5, by J. J. Ogle ; and Sir W. B. Forwood on " Libraries." Notes on books, new and old, Museum notes and latest additions during the quarter are also given.

**West Ham Library Notes. Oct.-Dec., 1903. Jan.-March, 1904.**

Gives memoranda on the work of the West Ham Public Libraries ; Lists of books on the Far East, Co-operative Movement in England with list of magazine articles and books on Co-operation, Library jottings, donors, selection of books added to the Libraries, interesting articles appearing in recent magazines and reviews, selection of stories in recent magazines, and a number of illustrations of the interior and exterior of the libraries.

**How to extend the usefulness of Public Libraries, by J. A. Charlton Deas, Library Bureau, Ltd. Post free, 7d. net.**

A paper read at a meeting of the Northern Counties Library Association, at Bradford, Dec. 16th, 1903, revised and extended. Pleads for more uniformity of method and greater economy in the administration of British Libraries. Some idea of its comprehensiveness may be gathered from the following subjects dealt with :—Rules and regulations ; Reference department rules ; Centralisation in classifying and cataloguing ; Rate limitation ; Facilities for borrowing books ; Indicators ; Fiction stock and issues ; Early closing ; Sunday opening ; Newsrooms ; Librarians and salaries, etc.

**Annotated syllabus for the systematic Study of Librarianship, by James Duff Brown, Borough Librarian, Finsbury. Library Supply Co. One shilling.**

An invaluable aid for students preparing for the professional examination of the Library Association. Comprising a classified reading list of the most useful books and articles dealing with Library Economy in all its branches, principally in the English language, though now and then French and German books are included when particularly valuable. Not altogether fair to the " Library Assistant." A number of useful papers have appeared in its pages which might be quoted.

**Revue Générale de Bibliographie Française. Avril, Mai, Juin, 1904.**

Further comment upon this admirable periodical is superfluous as it comprises all the features enlarged upon in previous numbers of this journal.

**Drexel Institute of Art Science and Industry, Philadelphia : Library School, Syllabus, 1904-5.**

Shows how thoroughly and efficiently library economy is taught in the United States. The course of instruction consists of Cataloguing, Library Economy, Studies of Books and Authors, Reference Work and Bibliography, Literary History and Extension, Practical Work, etc. Particulars of admission, fees, terms, and specimen questions to the entrance examinations are also given.

Reports have been received from the Croydon, Bootle, Battersea, Tynemouth, Hereford, Ashton-under-Lyne, Kendal, and Leyton Public Libraries; also Syllabus of the Arts and Crafts Exhibition Sandeman Library, Perth; List of Books on or relating to the Fiscal Question, West Ham Central Library; Lists of Books relating to the Russo-Japanese War, and History of Britain's Naval Power contained in the Stepney Public Libraries.

**Bulletin du bibliophile et du Bibliothécaire.** Jan. to May.

The place of honour in the May number is given to the first of a series of articles by M. Henry Martin, on the miniaturists at the Exhibition of French Primitive Painters; which is followed by a brief history of the career of the late M. Lorédan Larchey, Librarian of the Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal. It is given to few librarians to experience such a changeful life as fell to the lot of M. Larchey. Born in 1831, the son of a general, we find him at Constantinople on the outbreak of the Crimean War, ostensibly acting as secretary to a French savant, engaged in examining the MSS. in Turkish libraries and palaces, but really as secretary to his father who had been appointed commandant in that city. He became librarian of the Arsenal in 1873. Whilst holding this office he was sent on various missions by the Minister of Public Instruction. He was very strong on multiplying precautions against theft, and he often declared that if he were keeper of a collection of prints in a Public Library, he would not hesitate to place the official stamp in the middle of the pictures, however valuable they might be. M. Larchey was undoubtedly an excellent librarian; but, under the circumstances, it is a matter for congratulation that none of the great French collections of prints were ever placed under his care! The articles on the Baron de Longepierre and the library of the De Thous, which have been running for some months, are continued. In the column devoted to library news we note that the late Marquis de Naurois has bequeathed to the Bibliothèque Nationale his unique collection of autograph letters, books, and MSS. of Racine, of whom he was a descendant. It is pleasing to know that such priceless relics are safe in harbour at last.

**Rivista della Biblioteche e degli Archivi.** May.

The recent disastrous fire at the University Library, Turin, has given food for thought to all Italian librarians; and in the present number of this journal T. B. Barnabita describes a special method of providing against fire in libraries. It is a melancholy reflection that these devices should be thought of too late to be of service. Another article of much interest describes the new Archeval Library at Vienna.

---

**LIBRARY GOSSIP.**

**Bermondsey.**—The Borough Council have decided to "black out" all betting news in the newspapers placed in the libraries.

**Dartmouth.**—On Monday night at a meeting of the Dartmouth Town Council, a letter was read from Mr. W. S. Atkins, an ex-Councillor, asking the Council to consider the question of a public free library for the town. He had written to Mr. Carnegie, and had received a favourable reply. He asked Mr. Carnegie whether, considering the conditions prevailing at

Dartmouth, which was a naval port, with shipbuilding and bunkering, and contained many more men than most towns of its size, he would deviate from any conditions that would bar the town accepting a free public library. If a local fund were required, it might easily be raised by every member of the Council subscribing £10, and he, as an ex-member, whose place had not been filled, would be happy to do so. Mr. Row moved, and Mr. Voisey seconded, that the letter be referred to the General Purposes Committee. Mr. Medway said all must agree that a public library in Dartmouth would be a very good thing, but were the conditions imposed by Mr. Carnegie suitable for the Borough? He would give £10 if a local fund were needed. Mr. Wellington urged that the first point was: Were the ratepayers in favour of a public library on Mr. Carnegie's conditions? The matter was referred to a Special Committee.

**Deptford.**—The Public Libraries Committee have reported to the Borough Council that pending the provision of permanent premises for libraries, inquiries were being made for buildings which could be temporarily fitted up in three parts of the Borough as library centres.

**Eastbourne.**—The new Library and Technical Institute is to be opened by the Duchess of Devonshire shortly. This handsome and commodious building has cost £40,000 to erect, £10,000 of which was defrayed by Mr. Carnegie for the Public Library.

**Hampstead.**—Dr. Cunningham, a member of the Public Libraries Committee has presented a fine collection of corals to the libraries, which is now exhibited in the hall of the central library.

Mrs. Allingham's water-colour drawing of Stanfield House, one of the branch reading rooms of the Hampstead libraries, and interesting as the residence of Clarkson Stanfield, R.A., the marine painter, has just been purchased by subscription, and presented to the libraries.

**Nelson.**—Mr. Carnegie has offered £7,000 to the corporation for a public library. Nelson already has a library forming part of the technical school, and it is understood that this will now be devoted to the purposes of the school.

---

#### APPOINTMENT.

SHAWCROSS, Mr. W. H., late of Bury Public Library, to be an Assistant, Plumstead Library, Woolwich.